Oban in the Infinite

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Time goes on- until it goes back again. Molly- welcome to the Infinite Loops! Time loop fic. Molly keeps waking up in Stern, the day she ran away. Watch what she gets up to!

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Denial

Alright, I'm currently a big fan of the Infinite Loops. For those who haven't read the other fics about, the premise is this. The Universe is a bit broken, something crashed into Yggdrasil and the admins/gods and goddesses in charge started looping time as a sort of fail safe mode. In order to stabilise the various Universes, they started to grant awareness of the loops to Anchors. Eventually, more loopers join the anchor in the time loops- although they're not always Looping, so the Anchor might have what are called Lonely Loops.

The Loop mechanics are so:

One person in a Loop, often the main character, is an Anchor. They are the person who first starts time looping.

There is always at least one Anchor present in a given Loop snippet, though it may not be the local one.

The standard pattern for a loop is that the Anchor (and whoever else is Looping there) come to awareness in a loop at a particular point in the story. From there, events will play out as influenced by the Loopers present, acting with the benefit of their foreknowledge, until either a predetermined end point is reached or all the Loopers have copped it.

Loops do not have to be in chronological order, but it is strongly preferred that they not require a mutually contradictory order (where A must be before B and B must be before A.)

Just about every Looper is very, very stir crazy.

The first time she'd woken up in Stern, she'd thought that her entire adventure- The Whizzing Arrow, Jordan, Oban, Aikka, her father- had been a dream.

Really, what else could it have been? Reconciliation with her father, meeting Rick Thunderbolt, becoming the Earth Team Pilot- too many dreams come true in one dream. She told herself to ignore it, to just- get out of Stern, and then think about her options.

Maybe the entire thing was a sign. Her father had left her and never looked back ten years ago, she had to admit that to herself now. Chasing him down wouldn't make him her daddy again, wouldn't bring her mother back.

But there was no way she was staying in Stern. She'd rather take her chances out on the streets, maybe see if she could get a job as a mechanic. There had to be someone in the world who'd be desperate enough to hire a young girl with no qualifications or legal records. She just had to find them.

So she had left, exactly as she had in her dream. But while she had gone to Wei Racing, she'd never faced her father. Instead, she'd left a note for Don Wei at the security desk, not having any hope it'd reach him.

She had eventually found work- rough, hard and barely enough to keep herself fed. But it was work, so she persevered. She'd been ready to give up and try talking to her father again when the Crog Warships had darkened the skies.

We lost on Alwas. She'd thought, horrified. *Rick lost. We didn't make it to Oban. We're not competitors anymore.*

She'd eventually been caught in the rubble of a collapsing building, hating herself for the choice she'd made on that day…

And then she'd woken up. In the hallway of Stern. And she remembered that it had been her fifteenth birthday the day before. Again.

This time, she hadn't bothered going to Wei Racing at all after her escape. She'd simply made sure she was near a certain patch of

road, watching from the hills. When the truck came into view, a single Crog on top and strangling the driver, she'd attacked, exactly as she had the first time. She'd been caught up in the light of the Avatar's ship, and then everything had gone black.

She'd woken up with a flashlight in her eyes and Jordan's paranoid accusations in her ears. It may have been the most beautiful thing she'd ever heard.

Acceptance

Molly let out a heartfelt curse as she woke up in the cold hallway of Stern Academy. She had officially tried everything. Getting Rick to Oban had taken four tries, since the first time he'd been killed by a second sabotage attempt and killed twice more by Toros in the second race against the Crogs.

It had taken her a lot longer than she cared to think about, but she'd managed to get Rick stuck with the Avatar position. And then Aikka, Ondai, O, and Sūl, before finally giving up and winning the Ultimate Prize herself. She thought for certain that would do it, and in a way it had. Rather than suddenly waking up in Stern two years after escaping the place, she'd made it almost a full ten thousand years. She'd just been preparing to announce the next Great Race when the world had blanked out.

She sighed. What was she supposed to do now?

She lifted a hand, more out of morbid curiosity than any expectation, and attempted to summon her power. Her hand glowed red, and she let go with a start.

That… was *not* the Avatar's power. Molly let out a shaky breath and tried again, this time examining the energy. It wasn't the power granted to the Avatar by the Creators, or even Canaletto's. But it was influenced by both, and quite a bit by Oban itself.

Part of her mind- the part of her that had studied to be the best Avatar she could, in case of another Lord showing up- noted that made sense. Magical exposure at a young age could have serious influence on the innate magic of a person. Even in that first loop, she'd been taken in by Ceres the Mong, pitted her ship against Aikka and his arrows, been read by Spirit, had her mind attacked by Muir and Sul, and raced in the womb of Oban. In addition to those events,

she had activated the Arena of the Heart twice, and been used as a puppet by Canaletto.

That her own power had been influenced by these was far less surprising that the fact she had access to it.

She released the magic from her hands, feeling the sweat beading on her brow. It took more effort to access it as a human- but that wasn't a big deal. If she had nothing else, she had time.

Molly stood up, wincing at how exhausted she felt. She had to go collect her package from Ned, and then she'd be set for her Great Escape. She'd meet up with the team when she knocked that Crog off of Rick's truck; that tended to gain her a little more acceptance than following them from the garage.

The world had better look out- Molly was officially on her way!

Molly What?

Each loop, Molly, sometimes known as Eva, was faced with a dilemma. What to use as her surname?

Her own surname was out, even if she always considered herself a Wei. It was too much of a clue for Don, which meant her adventures would grind to a startling halt amid the screaming match. Fathers could ground you, employers couldn't. Not without a revolt from other employees at any rate.

Archer worked with the Whizzing Arrow, but also made Jordan come up with stupid snarky comments about Aikka and his bow and arrows.

Grace was ironic, a contraction of Great and Race- but the number of comments about how she didn't live up to that name were ridiculous.

Heart could be a reference to the Arena of the Heart, but it was an uncommon name, unless spelled Hart. The boys were impossible about it either way.

Molly Little invited short jokes. Molly Mouse sounded like a cartoon character. Molly Moon was a children's book series. Molly Star was too obviously an alias.

She could name herself after the Drudgers, but Molly Drudge or Molly Drudger sounded like a housewife. Her mother's maiden name was too obvious even if she did know it. And just pressing random name on baby name websites made her feel stupid.

Molly sighed deeply. Damn those boys anyway.

Change is Strange

Molly had a nasty shock when she woke up. Despite her best efforts, it got to her.

You'd think after ruling Oban for almost fifty thousand years in addition to all her other adventures she wouldn't be so easily shocked, but it wasn't so.

She- wasn't. Evan Wei was the only child of Maya and Don Wei. Except for the significantly easier time he'd had in getting to wear the boys uniform, and a differently coloured music player, they were pretty much the same. Which should have made things easier but really didn't.

She could have at least been taller dammit. He. Gaah!

Two months later, he decided to let Princess Aikka win the grand prize. He didn't ask Jordan out, but she didn't take it too personally, having decided that any boy named 'Molls' was bound to be a bit weird.

He swore to himself to never reference this loop ever again. Still, it was interesting to see how some things just didn't change.

She took it back. Nothing was sacred in the resets- Nothing! Molly, Star Racer was now… Molly the Gunner. Jordan was nowhere to be found.

And as to their pilot…

"Hey gunner girl." A lanky teen grinned. His hair was shorter, pulled into a tight ponytail. He didn't have his tattoos. And his clothes were significantly less stylish than usual.

But if the voice hadn't given him away, the sunglasses would have. Their pilot was a young, insecure and cocky Rick Thunderbolt. The estranged protégé of Don Wei, now Earth's only hope in the Race after their first pilot had been killed by Groor after winning their first race.

She raised her hand in a lazy salute. "Hey Rick. What do you want?"

"Now there Molly." He feigned disapproval. "You shouldn't assume the worst of people. I could just be wanting to spend time with my favourite gunner girl after all."

"But you don't. You want me to cover for you." Molly guessed, grinning at him as he flushed a bright red. "Date with the Princess, Lover Boy?"

It would never get old, seeing that blush on someone she'd once thought unflappable. Especially as he talked himself into a corner with a nervous laugh.

"You've gone to go over the track again if anyone asks me." Molly promised, sending a light kick at their pilots legs. "Now get gone before I change my mind."

Rick took off like a shot from their cannons. If the relationship between their pilot and the Nourasian Princess wasn't so surreal, it'd be funny.

Jovial like Jordan

Jordan couldn't believe his eyes- or his ears for that matter- when he found himself back at the Space Academy. He'd just been two years into his ten thousand year run as Avatar- if it hadn't been for the stench of the dorms then he wouldn't have believed it was real.

Odor de Cadet was distinctive though- his subconscious wouldn't have inflicted this on him, even if he did still dream like he used to.

With shaky legs, he decided to carry on with his day as if he hadn't done it before. As if he'd never been anything other than a normal human man.

Even with this plan in mind, he nearly flinched as the group from Wei Racing arrived. He tried not to pay attention to them, even as he earned his place on the team. Still, he couldn't help but look over the group for that flash of dyed red hair after he was chosen to join them.

His heart sank when he realised it wasn't there. Despite this, he held out hope- but their top secret meeting in Wei Racing's hangar wasn't spied upon by any teenage girl he could see. There was no gasp of shock, and when he looked up to check the skylight was shut.

He didn't let his melancholy distract him from his job- covering the retreat to the Avatar's ship he could faintly sense in the distance.

She wasn't there- wasn't anywhere that he could see. Hopefully, he'd see her on the module. They were dangerously close to it when a Crog jumped on Rick's lorry. Jordan cursed- he couldn't get a clear shot! Dammit, where was she?

He was considering trying what was left from his Avatar powers when a familiar rocket seat appeared out of nowhere, crashing into the Crog and knocking it away from Rick.

Jordan grinned, even as he took a shot at one of their other pursuers. The team was back together.